

editor's note

The little black dress is a staple in every woman's wardrobe. To her, it signifies all that is elegant, confident, sexy and timeless. It's a dress for all occasions, formal to flirty to fun. And like its namesake, Little Black Dress wine is a woman's assurance that she's making the perfect statement.

Chardonnay: This fresh fruit-forward Chardonnay has subtle hints of oak spice in the finish, overtones of lush apple and just a note of citrus.

Merlot: This medium-bodied Merlot has subtle hints of ripe black cherry, and the slightest bouquet of fruit, sweet oak and warm herb.

Pinot Grigio: A nice light tasting wine, this Pinot Grigio has subtle hints of floral spice and crisp fruit overtones from peach, pear and green apple. Also, has notes of mineral and an off-dry finish.



I have a good friend named Becky who was born to entertain. Whether she's throwing a backyard barbeque or hosting a sit-down dinner for 30, everything is absolutely perfect from the table linens to the drinks to the hors d'oeuvres. The ease with which she entertains is downright enviable. In fact, Becky is so good at entertaining that she started a business to help other people create perfect parties.

I've known Becky for 20 years, and for as long as I've known her, I've been secretly jealous of her ability to effortlessly welcome people into her home. For people like me, hosting a party always seems like such a great idea at the time, but as the event draws near, I begin to worry. Should I have a theme? What kind of food should I serve? Should I offer wine or cocktails, or both? Who will tend bar? Should I have a buffet or servers? How many desserts should I offer? What kind of music should I have? What if no one shows up? Or, perhaps even worse, what if they do? It's amazing how even the most confident person can be filled with self-doubt when it comes to the simple act of entertaining.

That's one of the reasons we decided to bring you this special entertaining section. Filled with must-have accessories, festive holiday drinks and innovative cuisine, it's designed to inspire your holiday gatherings. To guarantee success, we turned to some of Baltimore's most popular restaurants and bars to find spirited libations, savory hors d'oeuvres and sinfully decadent desserts, so no matter what you choose it's sure to be a crowd-pleaser.

As for the "party" shown in this section, we couldn't have done it without the help of people at the restaurants featured, who took time out of their schedules to make sure we had scrumptious plates of food to photograph. (Log onto baltimorestyle.com for addresses and phone numbers of all participants.) Special thanks also to VIN of Towson for letting us invade the restaurant for two days to photograph our "party," and to Flowers & Fancies for providing an abundance of fresh flowers.

So here's to Becky, and to all of you as you celebrate the season ahead. Write to me and tell me about your sensational soirees, and be watching for our next special wine and spirits section coming up in April.

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I loved these plates the minute I saw them! Turn to page 70 for more information. —C.P.

You can never go wrong with a
little black dress



Introducing classic new wines for any occasion. Available in Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, and Merlot.

Like your own little black dress, this wine not only demands attention, it deserves it.



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